Focus On: Free From
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The free from revolution is in full swing. The category is up 1.5% to £3.2bn in sales, according to Kantar, with allergen-free products cropping up across every kind of food and drink. Against the decline seen in broader grocery it's impressive. But not everyone has shared in the success as some big brands have seen their sales fall in the past year, and own label seems to be gaining faster than branded lines. So are free from pioneers at risk of being usurped by retailers' own lines? How will the trend play into the downtrading seen amid the cost of living crisis? And how can both kinds of suppliers provide real value in this premium category?

Brands: Several prominent brands have seen declines, despite the strength of the wider category. Are challengers eating into their sales? Or is own label responsible?

Supplies: A Coeliac UK survey reported a reduction in the number of gluten-free foods available in the last six months of 2021. Is availability still a problem for the category?

Price: Free from foods are often pricier than their regular counterparts, not benefiting from such economies of scale. How can such lines compete on value?

Health: Shopper awareness of the role diet plays in their health only seems only to climb. What are suppliers doing to fill more sophisticated requirements?

Technology: What new technologies are pushing the boundaries of free from?

Innovations: We will profile 4 new products or ranges that have ideally not appeared in The Grocer before. We need launch date, rsp, and a hi-res picture of each